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FM BRUSSELS 311540Z MAY 85
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 160 OF 31 MAY 85
INFO PRIORITY ROME

MF

FOOTBALL VIOLENCE: CALLS BY LORD YOUNG ON THE MAYOR OF BRUSSELS

1. I ACCOMPANIED LORD YOUNG ON A CALL THIS AFTERNOON ON BROUHON. LORD YOUNG EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS IN BRUSSELS ON PREVIOUSLY ARRANGED COMMUNITY BUSINESS BUT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD NOT HAVE WISHED HIM TO LEAVE WITHOUT CALLING TO REITERATE HMG'S HORROR AND REGRETS AT THE INCIDENTS AT THE HEYSEL STADIUM AND THEIR FIRM INTENTION TO TAKE EARLY MEASURES TO CONTROL THE VIOLENCE AMONG FOOTBALL CROWDS IN THE UK AND TO COOPERATE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN SEEKING TO RESTORE FOOTBALL TO THE FRIENDLY AND SPORTING MATTER THAT IT SHOULD BE.

2. BROUHON RESPONDED VERY WARMLY. HE THANKED LORD YOUNG FOR HIS CALL AND HIS WORDS AND SAID THE TRAGEDY AT HEYSEL HAD BEEN REGRETTABLE BUT THAT IT MUST BE SEEN IN PERSPECTIVE. VIOLENCE WAS AN INTERNATIONAL PHENOMENON AND THE EVENTS AT HEYSEL COULD HAVE OCCURRED AT EG A GERMAN-ITALIAN MATCH OR A BELGIAN MATCH WITH A TEAM OF SOME OTHER NATIONALITY. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION THIS MORNING FROM A BRITISH JOURNALIST WHETHER THE EVENTS ON WEDNESDAY WOULD AFFECT BELGIAN-BRITISH RELATIONS HE HAD ANSWERED FIRMLY IN THE NEGATIVE. NEITHER BELGO-BRITISH RELATIONS BETWEEN BRUSSELS AND LONDON WOULD BE AFFECTED. (AT THE END OF THE VISIT HE REPEATED LORD YOUNG THAT AS FAR AS HE WAS CONCERNED BELGIANS AND BRITONS HAD BEEN FRIENDS YESTERDAY, WERE FRIENDS TODAY AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE FRIENDS TOMORROW.

3. BROUHON WAS AT CONSIDERABLE PAINS TO EMPHASISE THAT THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE VIOLENCE ON THE PART OF THE JUVENTUS FANS ALSO. HE DREW LORD YOUNG'S ATTENTION TO PRESS PHOTOGRAPHS SHOWING JUVENTUS FANS ADVANCING ALONG THE PITCH ARMED WITH CLUBS (THOUGH IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THIS WAS INDEPENDANT OF THE EVENTS AT THE LIVERPOOL SUPPORTERS' END OF THE PITCH) AND TO THE PRESENCE OF EXTREME RIGHT -WING AGITATORS, PROVED BY THE PRESENCE OF AT LEAST TWO NEO-FASCIST FLANKS.

4. BROUHON ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO THE CAPTAINS OF THE TWO TEAMS WHO HAD GONE OUT TO CALM THE CROWD BEFORE THE MATCH BEGAN, APPARENTLY DESPITE SOME OBJECTIONS BY THE PRESIDENT OF JUVENTUS. HE EMPHASISED THAT THE DECISION TO CONTINUE THE MATCH WAS THE ONLY POSSIBLE ONE IF FURTHER VIOLENCE WAS TO BE AVOIDED, AND LORD YOUNG CONGRATULATED HIM ON A BOLD AND CORRECT DECISION.

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5. ON LEAVING BROUHON REITERATED HIS THANKS TO LORD YOUNG AND SEPARATELY ASKED ME TO CONVEY HIS RESPECTS AND BEST WISHES TO MRS THATCHER.

6. AT LORD YOUNG'S REQUEST I HAVE PASSED THIS TO HIS OFFICE IN LONDON, WHO WILL RELEASE THE NEWS OF THE VISIT AND THE BROAD LINES OF THE DISCUSSION TO THE MEMBERS SO THAT LORD YOUNG CAN AVOID MAJOR COMMENT TO THE PRESS HIMSELF AND THUS ALSO AVOID IN ANY WAY ANTICIPATING YOUR VISIT TOMORROW. WE HAVE MADE A BRIEF PRESS RELEASE HERE.

JACKSON

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